

**LVX
VERITAS
VIRTUS**

**Research Policy Oversight Committee
2021-2022**

Faculty Senate Report
6 April 2022



2020-2022 RPOC members

- Deirdre Loughridge (Assoc. Prof.; CAMD)
- Neel Joshi (Assoc. Prof.; COS)
- Lori Ferrins (Res. Assoc. Prof.; COS)
- Kim Holloway (VP of Research; *ex officio*)
- Steve Lustig (Assoc Prof; COE) presenting charge 1
- Eric Stewart (Asst VP, Dir., Space Planning; *ex officio*)
- Madhavi Venkatesan (Assist. Teaching Prof.; CSSH)

2021-2022 RPOC charge 1

The committee shall review implementation of NU Senate Resolution 23, 04/10/2021 that “Provost’s Office establishes and communicates a framework and related process for agreements that would be required for shared research resources (space, facilities, equipment)”.

The committee shall additionally examine progress on the university-wide adoption of the Charter Agreement Template entitled “Shared Space Charter Template”, proposed by RPOC in the 2020-2021 report.

Procedures:

1. The RPOC held discussion with Assistant Vice Provost (AVP) for Academic Space Planning about shared space policy enforcement
2. The RPOC surveyed administrators in each college who had responsibility for space planning and assignments to document (i) familiarity of shared space charters, (ii) college policy
3. The RPOC included questions in the Faculty Senate fall survey and provided a copy of the RPOC template for shared resources that could be downloaded.
4. The RPOC provided a complete report to Faculty Senate 4 January 2022

Findings

1. The Assistant Vice Provost for Academic Space Planning is aware and supportive of, but will not mandate, shared resource (space and equipment) agreements in accordance with the 2021 Faculty Senate resolution.
2. Now all colleges are aware of Faculty Senate's recommendation resolution, there are challenges in shared space
 - only a couple agreements have been completed
 - no repositories for agreements are available
 - current culture does not acknowledge benefits to sharing resources
 - difficult to expand/change research in shared space without expanding footprint
 - difficult to find space for research support and students in shared space
 - difficult to manage shared equipment that is not in shared spaces
3. Survey results:
 - 21% use shared facilities that are not fee-for-use
 - 0% indicate existing charter agreement in place for their shared spaces/eqt
 - 55% are not likely to use shared facilities
 - 9% were aware of the Faculty Senate shared charter template

Recommendations:

1. College deans and dept chairs must provide more advocacy: too much responsibility for creating/organizing charters rests on those with the least influence and authority, e.g. new hires
2. Responsible space, finance, and admin personnel at high levels be involved in the early stages of planning shared space and ensuring fair charter agreements exist
3. The reported results of Faculty Senate survey should be considered by dept chairs, college deans, higher admins as there are many actionable suggestions
4. Faculty Senate should continue to monitor and advocate for the creation of charter agreements for all shared spaces/equipment

2021-2022 RPOC charge 2

Following the committee's recommendation from 2020-2021 report, the committee shall meet quarterly with NU-RES and HSRP (Office of Human Subject Research Protection) staff to (a) continue exchange of operational information and system/platform updates, (b) facilitate faculty/research staff members' understanding of the University's progress, and to review KPIs and progress towards goals.

Procedures:

1. RPOC met with the following representatives to receive an update on operations:
 - Dana Carroll (AVP for Research Administration, NU-RES) – 01/21/2022
 - Nan Regina (Office of Human Subjects Research Protection, HSRP) - 02/18/2022
 - Robin Cyr (Vice Provost, Research Administration) – 02/23/2022

Findings

1. HSRP is understaffed (currently only 2 FTEs across the entire University), but protocol approval times have held steady (avg. review time ~30-40 days).
2. Increased research rate and expansion of the University via acquisition of new campuses (e.g. Mills) will put significant strain on the Office to keep up with its current pace. This may be exacerbated by the imminent retirement (timeline unclear) of Nan Regina, the current office Director.
3. Current database solutions employed by HSRP may be insufficient to accommodate higher demand.
4. The University has hired a consulting firm (HRP Consulting) in Fall 2021 to:
 - make recommendations on staffing (HSRP Director position posted)
 - make recommendations job descriptions
 - recommendations software/IT solutions
 - assess need for AAHRPP accreditation/covered entity designation from the Office of Civil Rights
 - the group's report is due this month.
5. The committee recognizes the hard work of the HSRP Office and thanks them for their ongoing commitment to facilitating research at the University.

Resolutions:

1. That the Faculty Senate should support, and advocate for, expansion of the HSRP personnel to deal with the increasing demands of the University in alignment with our R1 status.
2. The Faculty Senate should ensure that the IT capabilities of HSRP are expanded, and that they are afforded every opportunity to work with the developers to ensure better integration of systems.

2021-2022 RPOC charge 3

The committee shall review and propose indicators and processes, needed in NU-RES, to identify and resolve contracts, especially with non-standard agencies, foundations and external contractors, which are not progressing with effective expediency.

Procedures:

1. RPOC discussed charge with Dana Carroll (AVP for Research Administration, NU-RES) – 01/21/2022
2. RPOC requested and obtained a report from NU-RES on the state of contracts and agreements (summarized in full report).

Findings

1. eCLAWs adopted in January 2020
2. > 2500 agreements approved
3. doesn't have operational reporting functionality that enables analysis of the length of time an agreement is at various review stops.
4. Anecdotally, NU-RES have noticed a decrease in the number of complaints over the past 2 years due to improved processing times.
5. Median days to completion
 - Of the 2,060 agreements completed, 644 were completed in < 15 days
 - Of the remaining 1,416 agreements the average days to completion were 61, the median 44 and the mode 17.
 - Expedited requests take priority, but progress on other agreements is impacted
6. The most significant variation in time to completion was in the sponsored research agreements (SRAs). Delays tended to be due to complex agreements that involved multiple parties and NU-RES required multiple rounds of negotiation to resolve the issues. Examples provided in full report. The following were given as representative examples of the issues that cause lengthy delays:
7. NU-RES provides weekly productivity reports to Robin Cyr (VPRA), who shares the report with the respective college Associate Deans for Research (ADRs).

Recommendations:

1. RPOC recommends increased staffing for NU-RES, which is the main hurdle for faster turnaround times for contracts and agreements. (NU-RES was provisionally approved for 2 FTEs in FY2022)
2. RPOC encourages faculty to use the standard templates (created in conjunction with OGC) to decrease turnaround times (typically <5 business days) where possible.
3. RPOC would like to see greater functionality introduced into eCLAWs that enables NU-RES, faculty and administrators to understand how long agreements spend at each phase of the review process, and how this compares with the median.

Resolutions:

1. **The Faculty Senate should support, and advocate for, increasing NU-RES capacity in alignment with their already agreed upon hiring strategy, and including IT improvements**

2021-2022 RPOC charge 4

The committee shall review NU initiatives for research resumption after COVID-19, along with their execution.

Procedures:

1. The RPOC included questions in the Faculty Senate fall survey and provided a copy of the RPOC template for shared resources that could be downloaded.
2. The RPOC provided a complete report to Faculty Senate 2 February 2022

Findings

1. There are several issues that continue to impact research
 - Many specific to colleges and campuses (live performances).
 - Provision and cost of supplies (solvents, gloves, etc.).
 - IRB Approval times.
2. Some issues reflect administrative and cultural problems - not all a result of the pandemic.
3. Many comments reflected the lack of space that researchers have access to drive their research.
4. Survey results:
 - 79% of respondents indicated the university handled the research resumption process as well as could be expected.
 - 70% of respondents indicated that the processes were communicated as well as could be expected.

Resolutions:

1. The Faculty Senate should recommend a feasibility study to be conducted at the College level for whether the demand for stock room/s on campus would alleviate the supply chain shortages that we currently face, and whether discounts in bulk buying would offset costs.
2. The Faculty Senate should request that Colleges assess space allocations to ensure that, where possible, labs and offices are co-located.

2021-2022 RPOC charge 5

In collaboration with ITPC, LICC, the Provost's Office and NU ITS, evaluate the university's integrated services supporting the research data lifecycle, including protocols for data management and related data curation activities, including the option of systematic back- up of university computers

Procedures:

1. The committee reached out to ITPC and LICC to learn what they were discussing with regards to this charge
2. The committee sought additional clarification regarding the charge from the faculty senate

Findings

1. LICC is assessing library services supporting the research data lifecycle. ITPC is assessing library services as well as computing clusters under ITS.
2. The clarification of this charge from the Senate Committee asks: are new procedures necessary to enable the use of “virtual space” for storing non-sensitive research data and results, under a centrally managed system which would ensure a permanent data repository accessible to internal and external researchers?

Recommendations:

1. Further information gathering regarding whether there are faculty needs for storage of research data and results that are not currently being met
2. Continued communication between RPOC, LICC, ITPS

Proposed Future Charges

1. BE IT RESOLVED that the Provost and Chancellor's offices, College Deans and Department Chairs review the results of the Faculty Senate survey and the 2021-2022 RPOC report and develop an action plan for next academic year to increase efficiency of current research related processes discussed therein.
2. BE IT RESOLVED that the office of the Provost adopt the template for research charter agreements for all shared resources, including shared space and equipment from the 2021-2022 RPOC report.
3. BE IT RESOLVED that the Provost's Office should support, and advocate for, expansion of the HSRP personnel to deal with the increasing demands of the University in alignment with our R1 status.
4. BE IT RESOLVED that the Provost's Office should ensure that the IT capabilities of HSRP are expanded, and that they are afforded every opportunity to work with the developers to ensure better integration of systems.

Proposed Future Charges

5. BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate should support, and advocate for, increasing NU-RES capacity in alignment with their already agreed upon hiring strategy, and including IT improvements.
6. BE IT RESOLVED that the 2022-2023 Faculty Senate charge the RPOC committee to conduct a feasibility study of each college to determine whether the demand for stock rooms on campus would alleviate current supply chain shortages.
7. BE IT RESOLVED that the 2022-2023 Faculty Senate charge the RPOC committee to conduct a survey of all colleges to assess space allocations to ensure that, where possible, labs and offices are co-located.